ROADS

By Grace Fallow Norton

THE NEW POETRY SERIES

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The New Poetry Series

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IRRADIATIONS. SAND AND SPRAY. John Gould Fletcher.

SOME IMAGIST POETS.

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THE CLOISTER: A VERSE DRAMA. Emile Verhaeren.

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ROADS. Grace Fallow Norton.

GOBLINS AND PAGODAS. John Gould Fletcher.

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A SONG OF THE GUNS. Gilbert Frankau.

ROADS

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BY

GRACE FALLOW NORTON

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TO
G. H. M.

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CONTENTS

Rainbow Roads	1
Early still as I lay ill	3
The Cup of Color	4
Blue	7
The Purple Cloak	9
In a Green Place	10
Wings of Flame	12
Silver Spoils	14
Yellow Lilies Three	16
Violet and Vermilion	18
Gold, Blue — I	19
Gold, Blue — II	21
The White Veil	23
Hyacinth and Gold	25
Out Across the Snow	27
The Red Robe	28
The Plumes upon the Hearse of My Heart	30
The Dyes of Desire	32
The Road of the Rainbow	33
But deeper than all memory	35
Crossroads	37
I gave my heart to you once	39

CONTENTS

I Give Thanks 41
Make no Vows 43
Debts 44
Fly On 45
Bitter-Sweet 46
Flowers of Stone 48
Wings in Flight 50
When the Snow falls upon the Mountains 52
"If My Mother Knew" 53
Rise! Come! 55
The Dearest Town 57
"I Kiss You Once" 59
A Flood 60
I Write that on the Day when I no more shall be 61
Hark to the wind of the world! 62

THE RED ROAD 63
Is this the end of the journey? 65
The Mobilization in Brittany 66
The French Soldier and his Bayonet 70
The Journey 72
In this Year 75
The Volunteer 77
Cutting, Folding and Shaping 78
On Seeing Young Soldiers in London 79
O Peace, where is thy faithful sentry? 86

RAINBOW ROADS

"King Solomon made himself a palanquin
Of the wood of Lebanon.
He made the pillars thereof of silver,
The bottom thereof of gold,
The seat of it of purple. . . ."

Early still as I lay ill
Love-of-life came by,
Touched me and I had her will:
I thought I could not die.

Now I sing green of the leaf,
Red and river-blue;
I tell you never of my grief—
It is no longer true.

O the song was sweet, you say,
Though the song was sad.
Mayhap you'll leave my song to-day,
But lo, the day is glad!

THE CUP OF COLOR

My strength is spent and I thirst.
Bring me the golden wine first;
Bring me the red wine when I have done,
Nor deem the draught to be my desire,
For I thirst, I waste, for gold like fire
And for red like the heart of the sun!

(*Yesternoon I was silent*
And yestereve I was grave;
On a day to come, if the day bids,
I shall be patient and brave.)

The goblet gray of the years
Is full of tears, gray tears.
I have drowned it deep in the blue of the sea,
I have buried it deep in the blue of heaven,
And blue, blue is the robe I have woven
For a festal robe for me!

And I will arise and go forth,
Your earth-brown heiress, O Earth!
With scarlet banners, with bells, with song,

THE CUP OF COLOR

I come at noon through the yellow fields,
And the gleaming gold that your harvest yields
Is the gold for which I long.

O gold, my great desire!
O flaming wild flower of fire!
O emerald, my hope, and amber, my dream,
O bronze and blue on the mountain's brow,
O turquoise, I take you, I bind you now
With a silver thread of the stream!

And you, dark heart of the wave,
In my wave-wild heart I will have!
I pluck you, purple, from the wild vine,
I glean you, green, where the glen-wind blows,
I drink you, devour you, I reel with you, rose,
O rose, rose-red, you are mine!

With violet fill up my veins!
I will kneel in vermillion fanes!
Over ivory beaches, past burning cliffs — lo —
With light, with laughter, with shrill sweet song,
Down roadways red midst a marvelling throng
To the temple-gates I will go!

And the dome shall shine in the sky
Where doves with coral feet fly,
While I pray in the pearly shadow within
For blue-stained noons and for moon-shot mist,
For opal and olive and amethyst
And for scarlet to cleanse me from sin.

Then the agate urn, where white
Blooms the wild lily of night. . . .
The saffron veil of early eve
I will draw o'er mine eyes and over my breast
Pale gold of a living star low in the west—
So my golden life let me leave!

Of thirst the strong soul can die!
This deathly thirst I cry,
For the cup of color it feared and forsook!
Out of the ages, out of my night,
I pray, I pant for the brooks of light
As the hart for the water-brook!

(*Yesternoon I was silent*
And yestereve I was grave;
On a day to come, if the day bids,
I shall be patient and brave.)

BLUE

O MAN made a ship
To be a bowl for me.
I drank from its iron lip
All the blue of the sea!

I drank all the blue
Below, then from on high
Spilled to fill it anew
All the blue of the sky!

I clung to the deck,
Hearing the gulls cry.
Little did I reck
That death was riding by!

Death, it was you
In a mask of foam!
But I was drinking blue
And I was going home—

Home to my roaming
Homeless heart's desire!

With fire coming
To her far fire!

When I would lift my cup
The lordlier to drink,
The sea tossed it up
Till it touched morning's brink.

When I would dip it low
The deeper to drain,
Heaven lowered it so
It touched the tumbling main.

My mighty iron bowl
Held the flower of the sky,
And the sea was my tossing soul
With death riding by.

O rise, drain and dip!
Death can do nought to me!
I have drunk from an iron lip
All the blue of the sea!

THE PURPLE CLOAK

I SOUGHT the marvels of the world
Where'er her rainbow flags unfurled.

I caught the purple cloak of night,
I wound it round my body white,

Upon my head her starry hood,
I went to the still high white-stemmed wood.

I went to dance, I went to dream.
O nought more marvelous could seem

Than to wind your purple cloak, O night,
Around my body, milky-white,

Upon my head your starry hood,
And wild within the high still wood —

Flitting, flickering, like a flame —
To dance, to dance, to dream, to dream!

IN A GREEN PLACE

In a green place,
A vine-twined green place,
Where I wished to lie sweetly dreaming and
sleeping,
Where I wished to wake laughing and leaping,
In a green place,
A tree-guarded green place,
I saw a little girl in a black dress, weeping.

O little girl, what are you after there?
Now I must make some laughter there!
If she would laugh I could pluck a wreath for
my hair —
With a green wreath I should be more fair.
But alas, alas, always in the air
Is a little girl in a black dress, weeping. . . .

In a green place,
A shadow-girt green place,
I made a hole and let a bright bird through,
And I made another hole and let in the yellow
sun, too!

IN A GREEN PLACE

And she laughed and she sang and she grew!
And in a green place,
A garlanded golden-gay green place,
I sang for you!

WINGS OF FLAME

The world has bridges of bronze and tall gray towers
With beacon-lights burning and bells to tell the hours.
The world has blue islands and orange-funnelled ships,
And caves and waves the world has, with curving wind-wild lips.
The world has rich garments of red leaves and snow,
And here I would praise the world, for I love it so.

The world has women like fawns, like swans,
From castles and cottages they move over green lawns
To greet the world's warriors, within whose eyes
The mystery and history of all the world lies.
And children the world has, upon whose golden hair
The world casts her rapture, her glory, her despair!
And aged the world has, whose pity covers all.
(O world, grant me this pity, like flower-petals that fall.)

And wings has the world to bear it journeying
From dawn unto dawn and from Spring unto Spring.

WINGS OF FLAME

Blue wings at noontide, red wings at night,
Black wings at midnight, when dawn whispers, white.
Spread, spread for me, O world, your wings of flame!
Fold me, fold me, into a fiery dream!

SILVER SPOILS

And if the creature moils and toils
What is it to this song?
This is a song of silver spoils,
Caught swinging along.

Last night I walked the city street,
Wearing a woman's veil.
Then there was laughter; then there were feet;
Then there was silver hail

And harps and shaking silver bells
And flutes within my brain;
I stood beside deep silver wells;
I said, "We rise again!"

Love, let no light moon ever rise
Until my joy has risen!
I could not suffer heaven's surprise,
Finding me in prison!

Mirth, let no mad moon ever sweep
Heaven, nor find my floor
Swept where I have leaped from sleep
And danced before the door!

SILVER SPOILS

Light, let no white moon hunt through heaven
  Till I am hunting too!
When the silver bow is given
  My thoughts are arrows true,

And when she stalks the starry plains
  To fill her silver bowl,
I laugh in narrow lamplit lanes,
  A silver sallying soul!

Huntress, huntress, hold it high,
  Your globe of silver fire,
And I will draw and pierce the sky
  And lift a star from the mire!

And if my hand be stained by the dye
  Wherein all day it toils,
Still I come home beneath the sky
  Bearing silver spoils.

You did not guess me, swinging along?
  But if me my toil had tamed,
I could not tell you in a song,
  For I should be ashamed!

YELLOW LILIES THREE

He made a memory:
He laid three lilies down;
He broke from the apple-tree
White branches for a crown

He crowned the great god Jove,
A god of wind-worn stone;
This god had not his love
But strong he stood and lone

And would endure for aye,
And so he wove a crown,
Knelt at his feet to lay
Three yellow lilies down.

And wrote beneath his hand
Where never man might read:
"To-day white winds have fanned
The hill-sides and they breed

"White blossoms and the sun
On golden trellises
Lifts the bright lilies, one
For each gold hope of his;

"And I am mad, O god,
With youth and morn and May!
This is my day, O god,
This is my golden day!"

Thus ran his secret rite:
With yellow lilies three,
With blossoms, fragile, white,
He made a memory.

VIOLET AND VERMILION

For violet and vermilion
He gave his soul, a dove-white flame.
In purple pride now he lives on,
In purple pride, in scarlet shame.

And O the bitter trade, and O
That violet should be so dear!
That we who love vermilion so
For our white souls need ever fear. . . .

GOLD, BLUE

I

We shut our doors on you,
Gold, blue;
We feared you, you were not cold,
Blue, gold.

We said, we are seeking the true,
Gold, blue.
(We have sought the true from of old,
Blue, gold.)

O what are you, what is true,
Gold, blue?
Wild flowers in the wheat-field unfold,
Blue, gold,

Pale stars in the early eve too—
Gold, blue—
And earth is not cold, is not cold,
Blue, gold!

We have sought, we have fought for the true,
Gold, blue. . . .
So I battle to bless and behold
Blue, gold!

GOLD, BLUE

II

When Mary was the Queen of Heaven,
She wore a mantle blue,
Gold stars to her for crown were given,
Stars and sweet light thereto.

When Mary faded, who was so fair,
And lay within the ground,
Where did she leave her cloak and where
Her crown with radiance crowned?

(*Mary's mantle I did see*
Ere Mary died beside the tree.)

Ere Mary died who once in blue
Was sent to kiss her son,
She hung her mantle where Heaven's dew
Dreams the dear day begun.

Broad it hangs and bright in Heaven.
On shelves of night she laid
The gold stars we to her had given,
To crown our mother-maid.

(*Mary's mantle I have seen.*
Mary died who once was queen.)

Would you Mary's mantle wear,
O any woman? Dare you
Boldly cast your lot to share
That seamless robe of blue?

Would you the crown you gave her bear,
Brave queen, upon your brow—
O last queen, now left queenless here?
Dare you be star-crowned now?

(*Mary's jewel I have seen.*
Any woman could be queen.)

Any woman (the radiance grows!)
Dreaming of her dear day,
Who sends her own soul forth, who goes,
Huntress of her way,

Bearing myrtle, bearing myrrh,
Beholding the pale queen dead—
Blue heaven hangs, bright cloth for her,
Stars are for her head.

(*Mary's mantle I did see.*
Now mine own is more to me.)

THE WHITE VEIL

I HAVE forgot them all,
The faces of my friends.
I hear the shepherds call,
I watch the fountain fall,
And there remembrance ends.

For now no heart I have,
Only a scarlet flower,
Only a silver wave —
For these my heart I gave,
And for a rainbow shower!

And late within this land
I have become the bride
Of him within whose hand
Rests the wild silent strand,
The sombre mountain-side.

A silence full of song —
His shadow full of light. . . .
Long I desired him, long,
Following amid the throng
Ever his mantle white.

And now his veil I wear,
Lord of sorrows that cease.
His veil is white and fair,
Woven of evening air —
O white veil of Peace.

HYACINTH AND GOLD

The golden sun streams down over the golden sands
And crowned with a hyacinth crown I will linger a while and dream.
This land is full of old dreams and for to-day I deem
An olden dream will be sweet enough with hyacinth in my hands.

Lone stands the strong stone arch, shattered where sunbeams pass,
With columns cunningly carven, broken by storms long spent.
Where are the hearts that dreamed here, the hands that wrought and went?
Naught there is left that lives here, save hyacinth in the grass.

My heart, is it gold of the sun that clothes with its tissue now
An old cold saint that silent pensive and lonely stands,
And my young warm arms outstretched and the hyacinth in my hands?
Ay, it is gold that the golden sun has spun of old dreams, I trow.

Lo, I have lingered so long beside the broken plinth
That the sun has wrought in my flesh a fervent dream-
desire —
To wait on him here till my heart is naught but a
golden fire,
Till purple out of my pleading lips springs the wild
hyacinth!

OUT ACROSS THE SNOW

If all the lands were lost to me
    There's a land that I know,
A lonely land, a long land,
    A loved land of snow;

And if all the lands were lost to me
    In that land I know
I could live and make my little black tracks
    Out across the snow;

If all the lands were lost to me
    I should weep not. There would blow
From my sure, pure, paper land
    A wind that I know,

A wind that's never lost to me,
    Whispering, You may go,
Make your little crooked black tracks
    Out across the snow!

THE RED ROBE

I HAD great need of prayer the morn
I bound and crowned my hair,
My body with red I did adorn,
I had such need of prayer,

I had such need of prayer. And so,
Sandalling my swift feet,
I flung myself, adream, aglow,
Into swift music sweet.

I had such need of prayer I whirled
Like the wreathed white moon
Who whirls above the wind of the world
And turns within its tune.

And I had need of surging prayer,
So I threw my arms wave-wide,
And lifted them in the silver air
Like the surging great sea-tide.

And then at last (I was so fain
Of prayer), trampling brown earth,

I cried my pride, my peace, my pain,
My daily red rebirth!

My soul, my soul, and you were true!
You heard and answered there
My robe of red, my music too,
Myself, my pride, my prayer!

ERRATA

Page 28. *Insert period at end of first line.*
Page 38, *last line. For* "*trayers*" *read* "*travers.*"
Page 71, *line* 6. *For* "lone" *read* "love."

THE PLUMES UPON THE HEARSE OF MY HEART

The plumes upon the hearse of my heart
Were black as all the night,
But seeing them my soul's wild art
Said, "See! In the sun how bright!"

The plumes upon the hearse of my heart
Were black as all despair,
Yet seeing them my soul's wild art
Cried out, "I find them fair!"

The plumes upon the hearse of my heart
Were blots about the sky,
Yet seeing them my soul's wild art
Said, "Stately and how high!"

The plumes upon the hearse of my heart
Went tossing to the place
Where I laid with all my soul's wild art
The most belovéd face.

PLUMES ON THE HEARSE OF MY HEART

The plumes upon the hearse of my heart
  Came tossing back to the town.
Then seized them there my soul's wild art
  For wings and for a crown!

THE DYES OF DESIRE

I KISS you now with scarlet lips:
  They have touched forbidden fruit.
The scarlet pomegranate drips
  To the sound of a secret flute.

I touch you now with whiter hands
  And O more tenderly.
Long they have lain in lotus lands
  And learned what lilies be.

I bring you flowers — my blue eyes.
  Now they are bluer far
Than ere they had desired the dyes
  That robe the Eastern star.

I held them up to day's high blue,
  My dull, my empty eyes.
I held them up to midnight too,
  Wilful, wild and wise.

THE ROAD OF THE RAINBOW

'T was up in great fields and meadows,
'T was out on the airy way.
A gladdening, a glory,
Past cloud, over clod, it lay.

I went the road of the rainbow
To find the fairy gold,
And O my friend, I found it,
More than my hands could hold!

And some I could not carry
I flung with a cry through the skies!
Have you not seen the new stars
Winking their golden eyes?

And some I could not carry
I laid with a sigh in the earth.
My friend, I fear the miners
May never know its worth.

Its worth lies half in the finding
Out on the airy way.

(Hold not to the end of the rainbow
Where the gold grows old and gray!)

Its worth lies half in the flinging
Higher still in the skies,
In the flinging and the joyful
Singing and the cries!

But deeper than all memory
Of earth or the arch above,
There is lying, living deep in me
Burning remembrance of
The hands, the hands that paved the way
Unto each far delight,
Setting the signals of the day,
The torches of the night.

Almost it seems that it was hands
Have made the world so wide,
For that they lead us through green lands
And over the sea's gray tide.
Almost it seems they hold on high —
Blue-veined, quivering, strong —
The vaulted azure of the sky,
The rainbow of my song.

CROSSROADS

Les grand' routes tracent des croix
A l'infini, à travers bois;
Les grand' routes tracent des croix lointaines
A l'infini, à trayers plaines.

ÉMILE VERHAEREN.

I gave my heart to you once,
And that was long since. And long hence,
Broken with beauty and pain,
I'll give you my heart again.

My heart is hard as a stone
And lone. It is mine own,
Harsh and haughty and proud!
But I melt like a cloud,

I murmur and melt in the hour
That you put forth a leaf like a flower:
Broken with beauty and pain
I give you my heart again!

I took my heart to a height;
I hung it up in the light;
Content with its own bright store
It needed you no more.

I took my heart into Hell;
I let it look, look well;
It lifted a handful of flames
And called them cool sweet streams!

CROSSROADS

I took my heart round the earth;
It journeyed, mad from birth!
Content with upcurling smoke
My heart nor shook nor spoke,

Till you danced in rags in the street
And I flung my heart at your feet!
Broken it lay and beat. . . .
Broken with beauty and pain
I give you my heart again. . . .

I GIVE THANKS

THERE's one that I once loved so much
I am no more the same.
I give thanks for that transforming touch.
I tell you not his name. . . .

He has become a sign to me
For flowers and for fire.
For song he is a sign to me
And for the broken lyre.

And I have known him in a book
And never touched his hand,
And he is dead. I need not look
For him through his green land.

Heaven may not be. I have no faith,
But this desire I have—
To take my soul on my last breath,
To lift it like a wave

And surge unto his star and say:
His friendship had been Heaven.

And pray: for clouds that closed his day
May light at last be given.

And say: he shone at noon so bright
I learned to run and rejoice!
And beg him for one last delight—
The true sound of his voice.

There's one that once moved me so much
I am no more the same,
And I pray I too, I too, may touch
Some heart with singing flame.

MAKE NO VOWS

I MADE a vow once, one only;
I was young and I was lonely.
When I grew strong I said, "This vow
Is too narrow for me now.
Who am I to be bound by old oaths?
I will change them as I change my clothes!"

But that ancient outworn vow
Was like fetters upon me now.
It was hard to break, hard to break,
Hard to shake from me, hard to shake.

I broke it by day but it closed upon me at night.
He is not free who is free only in the sunlight.
He is not free who bears fetters in his dreams,
Nor he, who laughs only by dark dream-fed streams.

O it costs much bright coin of strength to live!
Watch then, where all your strength you give!
For I, who would be so wild and wondrous now,
Must give, give, to break a burdening bitter vow!

DEBTS

Render unto Cæsar Cæsar's due;
His dues give alway to the devil too;
To Jesus yield your life (he gave his for you).

For Cerberus but a sop; an obol or two
For Charon. Endebted soul! Have you
Aught now left to pay what to yourself is due?

FLY ON!

O Dove, you lay on the altar of her
Called Venus, called goddess of love.
Your wings were wounded, you did not stir,
And you died 'mid her flowers, O Dove.

But a breath stirred the world, it flooded to you
And you quivered and lived, O Dove,
And lifted your wings and flew — and flew
To Mary, called mother of love.

And you touched the son of Mary the maid
By the great white throne of love. . . .
But the flowers at Mary's footstool fade
And you died 'mid her flowers, O Dove.

O live again! Fly on to mine own,
Mine own bright garden of love!
The wind is cold round the ancient throne,
But my day desires you, O Dove!

BITTER-SWEET

O savor it and flavor it
And strive to make it meet.
'T is bitter, bitter, bitter,
And yet it is so sweet.

All the ways to live
We try with all our strength.
"Pay, I will not give!"
Crieth Life at length.
But the price, Life, the price?
"Now thou shalt pay me twice!
Thou shalt pay, pay in pain,
Then thou shalt pay again!"

A blossom of living bliss
Blooms on high in my sky.
Life, what is the price of this?
This living bliss I would buy.
So the price, Life, the price?
"O thou shalt pay me twice!
Thou shalt pay, pay in pain,
Then thou shalt pay again!"

So I buy, buy my days,
Bidding high for an hour,
For, Life, I have learned thy ways —
The price, it is in my power!
O the price, Life, the price,
I can pay it twice, thrice!
I have paid, paid in pain,
And I 'll pay thee again and again!

O savor it and flavor it
And seek to make it meet.
'T is bitter, bitter, bitter,
But the very dregs are sweet.

FLOWERS OF STONE

I have drunk deep out of sculptured fountains,
Climbing wide carven stairs,
Seeking the stony white heart of the mountains
And the beauty it bears.

I have come proudly through marble portals,
Hugging my joy alone,
Learning the loveliest dream of mortals —
The blossoming of stone.

On the high altar I lay my flowers,
Yarrow and yellow broom.
There they will wither, but all the hours
Blight not the marble's bloom.

All the hours and all the long frowning
Years fade never the fair
White immortal garland crowning
Time and silence there.

Radiant earth and swift Spring, the rover,
Bear their frail issue bright;

But earth's hid heart waits her lover
Man, with his mind's hid might!

Man! When the flowers fade by the fountains,
When the leaf lies alone,
Dream your dream of her heart in the mountains:
Wreathe for me flowers of stone!

To each his sacred task.
Soul! Oracle! I ask —
Tell me my sacred task!

"*You must leave the bright flock of the angels*
And leave their belovéd faces,
And fall like Lord Lucifer
Down through cold great spaces.

"*You must leave the white halls of the angels*
And leave their level light,
And leap with lame Lucifer
Into stark dark night.

"*You must leave the high bliss of the angels*
And leave their prayerful peace,
And turn like light Lucifer
And whirl and never cease.

"*You must leave the cool wells of the angels*
And leave their chanting choirs,
And burn like lost Lucifer,
Seeking eternal fires."

Cold immense echoing spaces!
O stark black empty night!
Farewell, belovéd sweet faces!
Farewell, clear lamps of light!
No music is here but crashing,
No effulgence here but the flashing
Of my wings in flight.

Farewell, veiled holy graces!
Farewell, O hushed and bright!
I go to dream in dread places
Of a height beyond your height!
Unto outer darkness given,
I go to set beyond heaven
The spark that is my light!

WHEN THE SNOW FALLS UPON THE MOUNTAINS

When the snow falls upon the mountains,
Though I am so far away,
My heart runs up to the frozen fountains,
Hushed all the happy day.

And my heavy head bends as the laurel
(I remember, I know)
Bends its branches of twisted coral
Beneath the heavy snow.

When the snow falls upon the mountains,
Though I am so happy, so far,
My heart beats against the frozen fountains,
Where the trembling waters are.

My heart leaps to where the living
Waters bide the time
Of their outgoing and outgrowing and outgiving
In running rivers of rhyme.

My heart cries to the hidden berry,
Scarlet beneath the snow,
"There is release! Life dares not tarry!
I remember, I know!"

"IF MY MOTHER KNEW"

If my mother knew
How our doves at dawn
Shake me with their wings,
Wild, bewildered, wan,
When the white star sings
And they would be gone,

Would she from her sleep
Rise and look afar,
Past our fold and keep,
To that pulsing star?

If my mother knew
How the heath in flower
With its faint perfume
At the twilight hour,
Fills my little room
Like some lady's bower,

Would she from the hearth
Rise and look again,
Past our hedges — forth
To the purpling plain?

CROSSROADS

If my mother knew
How my heart will beat
With the hope of hands,
For the fall of feet,
Though no pilgrim bands
Find our narrow street,

Would she from the loom
Rise, remembering so
How the heart must roam?
Then — would she let me go?

RISE! COME!

Every morning, dark or fair,
To my doorway comes Despair;
Says, "Behold now the turf is brown,
Peace is there where you would lie down."

Every morning, fair or dark,
Comes Despair to bid me hark,
For behold now the turf is green,
Peace is there where I might have been.

But I think I am hearing a drum,
And I think I hear, "Rise! Come!
Swift one! Slender one!" And I say,
"Go!" for I know the voice of Day.

Day it is and her slave the Sun
Would woo me for I am not won.
Lend me, lover, a flower of your fire—
I would be one with the world's desire!

Lend me sandals, for I run a race.
Drunken I am with the dream of a face!

Drunken I am with the dream of a tune!
I would reel in the sun's red shoon!

And wild with the dark when the Day has gone,
In dreams my dance and I are one—
Till with morning, false and fair
At my doorway stands Despair.

"Now behold where the green turf is—"
But I am one whom the Sun would kiss!
O slave Sun! O darling day!
Call, ere her shadow has barred the way!

THE DEAREST TOWN

I THINK of the tall gray towers of my dearest town,
Where the venders of gay flowers go crying up and down,

I think of the little alleys all dim with purple light,
And the portals of the palace, green and gold and white!

For I love each maiden singing and sewing there,
And the market-women laden with cheeses round and rare,

And the little children laughing because life is so gay,
And the tall men chaffing, quaffing red wine upon the quay.

I love the worst and the fairest, the black, the blond and the brown.
Not one is best or dearest within my dearest town.

My distant darling city, my stateliest, loveliest!
My painted, praised — 't were pity, had I loved any best!

CROSSROADS

For had I loved a lover, you would but seem a road,
Your roads would but discover the roof of his abode.

You would not be you only — you would be a square,
a door,
A stair, a chamber lonely, a face forevermore!

But I love the worst and the fairest, the black, the blond
and the brown:
Not one is best or dearest within my dearest town!

"I KISS YOU ONCE"

I KISS you once for your blue eyes
And once for your golden curls.
I hug your warm little body
And think of all dear little girls.

In every place they have them,
Golden and blue and rose;
In every place they kiss them,
And that is the way it goes.

They're all of a droll little sameness,
Golden and rose and blue;
But each has a dear little difference,
And one of them is you.

So I kiss you once for the sameness,
For all the dear little girls,
And I kiss you twice for your own two
Blue eyes and your golden curls.

A FLOOD

Every — everywhere I be,
Trickles, trickles busily,
All through my heart and in and out,
A little rill of poetry.

Now I must dig a ditch for me
To catch my rill of poetry!
A ditch of words might be about
Enough for my capacity.

But O it runs too fast for me!
(It trickles, trickles busily);
"The ditch and dykes give way," I shout,
"The land is drowned in poetry!"

I WRITE THAT ON THE DAY WHEN I NO MORE SHALL BE

After the French of the Countess de Noailles

I WRITE that on the day when I no more shall be,
Men know how air and pleasure once pleased me;
And that my book to future folk shall tell
That I loved joyous nature and my life, how well.

Attentive to the labor of the house and field,
I marked each day the form of the season's yield,
Knowing that water, earth and the mounting flame
Are in no place so beautiful as in my dream.

All that I have seen and felt, all I have told,
From a heart for which no truth was ever too bold;
With ardor, because of love that was my breath,
And that I might be loved again after my death.

And that a young man reading then my written word,
Feeling his heart by me troubled, stirred,
Forgetful of real wives who wait for him,
Should take me to his soul, preferring me to them.

Hark to the wind of the world!
The shafts of my life are far-hurled —
I cannot belong to you!
I belong to the cataract, leaping;
I belong to the west wind, weeping;
I belong to the white swan, sleeping;
I belong to the wild curlew!

Away! I say it must end!
Call me not, call me not friend —
I am false for I must be true!
I belong to the cedar, swinging;
I belong to the silence, ringing;
I belong to the noon-sun, singing
Where the singing god-reed grew.

Go farther, farther away!
I will walk with you yet, some day,
But I will not belong to you!
I belong to the eagle, flying;
I belong to the sea-tide, sighing;
I belong to the wilderness, crying;
I belong to dawn and the dew!

THE RED ROAD

— a patriotic cry,
A battle, bravery, ruin; and no more?

THOMAS HARDY

Is this the end of the journey?
Bright bridge and gala street
Led but to the black shadow
That shakes beneath our feet?

Is this the end of the journey?
The ship sailed only to go
Where the wild sea broke and parted
And rose and dealt her the blow?

Is this the end of the journey?
On rainbow wings to rise
And fly but to meet our dark mate
Who breaks our wings as he flies?

Is this the end, O pilgrim?
Or is there a builder for me,
Building a ship to sail farther
On the crimson cruel sea,

Where wounded wings rise higher —
Paving with lives a road
That will journey onward, onward,
Over great bridges of blood!

THE MOBILIZATION IN BRITTANY

I

It was silent in the street.
I did not know until a woman told me,
Sobbing over the muslin she sold me.
Then I went out and walked to the square
And saw a few dazed people standing there.

And then the drums beat, the drums beat!
O then the drums beat!
And hurrying, stumbling through the street
Came the hurrying stumbling feet.
O I have heard the drums beat
For war!
I have heard the townsfolk come,
I have heard the roll and thunder of the nearest drum
As the drummer stopped and cried, "Hear!
Be strong! The summons comes! Prepare!"
Closing he prayed us to be calm. . . .

And there was calm in my heart of the desert, of the dead sea,
Of vast plains of the West before the coming storm,
And there was calm in their eyes like the last calm that shall be.

And then the drum beat,
The fatal drum beat,
And the drummer marched through the street
And down to another square,
And the drummer above took up the beat
And sent it onward where
Huddled, we stood and heard the drums roll,
And then a bell began to toll.

O I have heard the thunder of drums
Crashing into simple poor homes.
I have heard the drums roll "Farewell!"
I have heard the tolling cathedral bell.
Will it ever peal again?
Shall I ever smile or feel again?
What was joy? What was pain?

For I have heard the drums beat,
I have seen the drummer striding from street to street,
Crying, "Be strong! Hear what I must tell!"
While the drums roared and rolled and beat
For war!

II

Last night the men of this region were leaving. Now they are far.
Rough and strong they are, proud and gay they are.
So this is the way of war. . . .

The train was full and we all shouted as it pulled away.
They sang an old war-song, they were true to themselves, they were gay!
We might have thought they were going for a holiday—

Except for something in the air,
Except for the weeping of the ruddy old women of Finistère.
The younger women do not weep. They dream and stare.

They seem to be walking in dreams. They seem not to know
It is their homes, their happiness, vanishing so.
(Every strong man between twenty and forty must go.)

They sang an old war-song. I have heard it often in other days,
But never before when War was walking the world's highways.
They sang, they shouted, the *Marseillaise!*

The train went and another has gone, but none, coming, has brought word.
Though you may know, you, out in the world, we have not heard,
We are not sure that the great battalions have stirred—

Except for something, something in the air,
Except for the weeping of the wild old women of Finistère.
How long will the others dream and stare?

The train went. The strong men of this region are all away, afar.
Rough and strong they are, proud and gay they are.
So this is the way of war. . . .

THE FRENCH SOLDIER AND HIS BAYONET

Farewell, my wife, farewell, Marie,
I am going with Rosalie.

You stand, you weep, you look at me—
But you know the rights of Rosalie,

And she calls, the mistress of men like me!
I come, my little Rosalie,

My white-lipped, silent Rosalie,
My thin and hungry Rosalie!

Strange you are to be heard by me,
But I keep my pledge, pale Rosalie!

On the long march you will cling to me
And I shall love you, Rosalie;

And soon you will leap and sing to me
And I shall prove you, Rosalie;

And you will laugh, laugh hungrily
And your lips grow red, my Rosalie;

And you will drink, drink deep with me,
My fearless flushed lithe Rosalie!

Farewell, O faithful far Marie,
I am content with Rosalie.

She is my love and my life to me,
And your lone and my land — my Rosalie!

Go mourn, go mourn in the aisle, Marie,
She lies at my side, red Rosalie!

Go mourn, go mourn and cry for me.
My cry when I die will be "Rosalie!"

THE JOURNEY

I WENT upon a journey
To countries far away,
From province unto province,
To pass my holiday.

And when I came to Serbia,
In a quiet little town
At an inn with a flower-filled garden
With a soldier I sat down.

Now he lies dead at Belgrade.
You heard the cannon roar!
It boomed from Rome to Stockholm,
It pealed to the far west shore.

And when I came to Russia,
A man with flowing hair
Called me his friend and showed me
A flowing river there.

Now he lies dead at Lemberg,
Beside another stream,

In his dark eyes extinguished
The friendship of his dream.

And then I crossed two countries
Whose names on my lips are sealed. . . .
Not yet had they flung their challenge
Nor led upon the field

Sons who lie dead at Liège,
Dead by the Russian lance,
Dead in southern mountains,
Dead through the farms of France.

I stopped in the land of Louvain,
So tranquil, happy, then.
I lived with a good old woman,
With her sons and her grandchildren.

Now they lie dead at Louvain,
Those simple kindly folk.
Some heard, some fled. It must be
Some slept, for they never woke.

I came to France. I was thirsty.
I sat me down to dine.
The host and his young wife served me
With bread and fruit and wine.

Now he lies dead at Cambrai—
He was sent among the first.
In dreams she sees him dying
Of wounds, of heat, of thirst.

At last I passed to Dover
And saw upon the shore
A tall young English captain
And soldiers, many more.

Now they lie dead at Dixmude,
The brave, the strong, the young!
I turn unto my homeland,
All my journey sung!

IN THIS YEAR

It is a poor thing to sit here safe at home
And when great hopes are calling, to be dumb.
It is a poor thing to send not even a cheer
To men who fight our battles in this year.

Our battle for our breath republican!
Breath, O man, for the struggling soul of man
That strives and longs — that dies and lives of late —
Kingless to bear kinglike at last its fate!

Casting away the crown, casting the crutch
Away — the sceptre, trusted overmuch —
Crowning at length each separate strong soul,
Whereby men know that they are men and whole!

This was the hope to which we set our hand
In a green, generous, timeless, taleless land.
They watched our birth from far with faith and fear.
What is our faith? What fear we in this year?

Are we so strong that we could stand for aye
With those far fire-tried Faithful torn away?

Are we so weak that we can stand no more —
So broken, dreamless, paltry, spirit-poor?

O 't is a poor thing to send the world no word,
As though now they were naught — death by the sword,
Love's daily dying — uttermost gifts of faith —
For such brave being, such free passionate breath!

THE VOLUNTEER

Sow white stars in a sky of blue.
(I should be safe, at home with you!)
Burn red bars on a field of white.
(I dreamed of liberty last night.)

Like a flower against the sky,
(Might it, flower-like, fade or die?)
Blue and white and bright blood-red,
I saw it float above my head.

Like a flower, blood-red, blue
And white, and strangely worn and wet,
The flag of France was flying too. . . .
(I dreamed last night of Lafayette.)

Strew white flowers on a coat of blue.
(I could be safe, at home with you!)
Spill red wine on a cloth of white. . . .
I fight for freedom and France to-night!

CUTTING, FOLDING AND SHAPING

We have made hundreds of oakum-pads and dressings and compresses,
Cutting, folding and shaping, amid murmuring women's voices.
The woman beside me has lost two brothers, so they tell.
She tells no one. . . . She works well. . . .
The young girl beyond knows her lover will soon be sent;
He goes with the foreign regiment,
But her father is serving Austria at Trente.
They come here and make oakum-pads and dressings and compresses,
Cutting, folding and shaping, amid murmuring women's voices.
I wish I were a great commander of the army,
Strong and rough and stormy.
The spirit of Lafayette would come to me
And I would go over the sea,
Sure of followers, crying, "Who will follow me!"
I am a pale Joan of Arc, seeing visions, hearing no clear voices,
So I sit here and make oakum-pads and dressings and compresses.

ON SEEING YOUNG SOLDIERS IN LONDON

I

I HAVE no Heaven for myself. My heart is Heaven here.
To unfold, to fade — it is enough, earth and a dream so dear.

But I craved Heaven for them, for them! Let there be Paradise!
They go to die ere they have lived, their youth within their eyes.

They go to die for the bond, the word, that the dream of dreams may grow.
It is their will. They say farewell knowing where they go. . . .

Though they have Heaven as they die, knowing they die so well,
Knowing the dream is dear enough, as all who live will tell,

Knowing this death is life — yet — youth is in their eyes!
O let them wake, laugh and unfold! For them, green Paradise!

II

I HEARD that old men were murdered, young children harried and hurt,
While world's wonderful wonders were burned and turned to dirt,

And I flamed! I was lost! All my world rocked and broke in blood!
Stood the Arch-smiter near I had crushed him where he stood!

Sudden in my soul leaped the beast that lives in each soul and sleeps
Till he hears the cry of an eye for an eye! Then he lives and leaps!

(O do not bid me say that he lies not, lives not, in you.
My songs sweep the souls of men and they know that this is true.)

Soul, send him to sleep more deep! For we must take
torches and go
With the great processional that is mounting, mount-
ing, slow,

Slow, on, on — with torches, ay, and with spears!
For soldiers are marching with us — soldiers, suffer-
ers, seers —

Struggling through time's ages, desperately struggling
to-day
On the plains of France and Flanders, where Woe
has pointed the way,

Striving to see true Justice, striving to win her will,
To reach her fair sure fortress, to build on her tower-
crowned hill!

III

We would build Justice a throne;
We were giving her land by land,
And each true voice and each hand:
All this she should have for her own.

But she harkened, she heard the moan
Of a little land over the sea,

And Justice could not let be;
She said, It is shaking, my throne!

So now we must build, bone on bone,
Body on body, with blood,
With tears, with youth, with manhood,
Faltering, groan on groan,

With steel and showering stone,
With the mortar's murderous breath,
With horror and anguish and death —
All these she must have for her throne!

IV

Is this the dream that follows you?
By this dream am I haunted too.

That where the sword hung I saw it hang,
That I saw the thin-worn thread,
That I heard the trumpets ere they rang,
That I saw the wide wounds ere they bled,
That I saw the dead. . . .
But that ere they died I went alone —
Alone, alone, alone —
Though none upheld, none followed me, none,
I dared to go alone —

ON SEEING YOUNG SOLDIERS IN LONDON

Barefooted, with a staff in my hand,
Faithful, from land to land,
Like a lash, like a torch, like a brand,
With one cry and one call:
"Take down the hanging sword from the wall!
Lift it and bring it to earth ere it fall!"

(O had I gone thus might they not have heard?
Alas, alas, I never stirred!
I saw no sword.
I was always hearing a blue trilling bird.)

Is this the dream that follows you?
By this dream am I haunted too.

V

Banners and bugles! My ship is going down!
Too late for hope, too late for any prayer.
Then sing! Fling flags into the air!
Red flags, red flags! O scarlet victory!
Blue banners, blue — let them flout the sky,
Let some wild song ring, make it sweet to die!
Trumpets and drums! The deep has spread its bed!
Trumpets and drums! Spread banners, blue and red!
Weep not, wail not, it is not death to drown!
Banners and bugles! My ship is going down!

VI

The eyes of the world are weeping
Red tears, terrible tears!
The bitter flood goes sweeping
Down through yearning years.

For the heart of the world is breaking —
O sore and stricken heart!
But a sorrowful woman is waking
Slow, who slept apart.

Silent, bent and burdened,
She slept in a seething world;
She sighed and slept, world-pardoned,
While war-flags were unfurled.

Lover, life-giver, woman —
Behold the torn strewn lives!
Was your deep sleep the foeman
In the swarming arming hives?

(O that I am beholden
To find my fate in hers,
Who would be glad, gay, golden,
Lost in a murmuring verse.)

ON SEEING YOUNG SOLDIERS IN LONDON

Awaken, Slothful, awaken!
The red tide reaches the sea!
The heart of the world is broken. . . .
What dare we bring or be?

VII

Once I cried, "The world is wide!"
But the world is wide no more. . . .
Shore breaks upon shore,
Tide baffles tide,
Hill rides over hill
Where the high hills were lying,
And on one plain the whole of the world is dying!
Yet up and down my soul, singing still,
(Death has stopped her laughter, can death stop her deeds?)
Life with red lips drives her wild strong steeds,
Denying and crying, crying,
"Go!"

O freedom, freedom, freedom,
I did not know I loved you so!

O Peace, where is thy faithful sentry? Where is thy fort?
Where are thy serried legions who go singing forth to save?
O Peace, where is thy flag-filled port?

Wilt thou come armored in iron or armed only with light?
Art thou strong-bodied servant to Justice or wouldst thou call her slave?
O Peace, what hast thou for thy might?

We who have not kept thee, shalt thou keep us, Peace?
Where are thine haste, thine heart-to-heart, thy bells, thy beacon-flames?
In thine house must the bugle cease?

Where are thy desperate lovers who would die for thee?
Fighting for kings men die to-day by choked and crimson streams —
For kings or for democracy!

For thee, for thee, has any chosen thus to die?
Art thou so sweet to men as crowns of kings or kingly dreams?
Here lie the desperate lovers of liberty!
O Peace, what is thy battle-cry?

"*Jeanne d'Arc, mettez beaucoup de colère dans nos cœurs.*"

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